

Amendments to the Specification

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 2, line 8, with the following rewritten paragraph:

When dots of black ink are ejected directly onto a light colored portion, the black dots will give the light colored portion a "rough" dot appearance, resulting in an ~~unnaturally-looking~~unnatural-looking color image. For example, in order to record an image of a shadow falling on a color image of a person, three primary colors of cyan, magenta, and yellow are used to reproduce the image of the skin portion of the person and black ink is ejected onto the skin portion to reproduce the image of the shadow portion. In this case, dots of black ink make the light colored skin portion appear rough and unnatural.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 4, line 24, with the following rewritten paragraph:

In order to solve the above and other objects, the present invention provides an image data conversion method for converting input image data for four color components of cyan, magenta, yellow, and black into output image data for recording operation, the method comprising the steps of: receiving input image data for four color components of cyan, magenta, yellow, and black; dividing the input image data for the black component into distribution data for the four color components of cyan, magenta, yellow, and black, thereby converting the input image data for the black component into output image data for the black component; and combining the distribution data for cyan, magenta, and yellow color components and the input image data for the cyan, magenta, and yellow color components, respectively, thereby converting the input image data for the three color components of cyan, magenta, and yellow into output image data for the three color components of cyan, magenta, and yellow.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 6, line 20, with the following rewritten paragraph:

Accordingly, even when the black color component is added to the middle of the gray scale reproduced by cyan, magenta, and yellow, the gray scale will have a smooth gradual tone representation with no point of inflection in its tone level.